



Parent Support Services Society of BC

Newsletter

Summer –Fall 2018, Vol 39 #1

Grandparents’ Day is coming! Sunday September 9



Where ?

- [In the Lower Mainland: New Westminster Quay \(10-2 pm\)](#)
- [In Victoria: Willows Beach – Oak Bay \(12 – 2 pm\)](#)
- [In Prince George: Paddlewheel Park -off Hamilton \(11-1 pm\)](#)
- [In Nanaimo: Bowen Park – Lower Picnic Shelter \(11-2 pm\)](#)
- [Plus Online Silent Auction](#)

Why Grandparents’ Day?

You have heard of Father’s Day and Mother’s Day. The 2nd Sunday in September is International Grandparents’ Day. PSS marks this day to celebrate all grandparents, and shine a spotlight on grandparents who are raising their grandchildren, as well as other kinship caregivers.

In BC there are more than 13,000 children being raised full time by their grandparents (or other relatives). Their stories are varied, but many of the threads are the same: loss, isolation, grief, hardship, love, and determination.

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Know someone who has made a difference in kids’ lives? Nominations are now open for the 2018 Bill McFarland Award—Details on page 11

Grandparents' Day Continued

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and other Kinship Caregivers (GRGs) face complicated bureaucracies – legal, financial, and governmental – that are difficult (and often expensive) to navigate. Poverty is a serious risk (they receive little to no financial support, and often spend what savings they might have on fighting for and supporting their grandkids). They lose friends, and seniors' programming and housing rarely meet the needs of GRG families.

The grandchildren are their priority and these children need and deserve, love, stability and all the support possible to ensure they thrive. [\(Check out our acclaimed documentary, "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Telling Our Stories"\)](#)



What is happening?

On Grandparents Day – Sunday, September 9– Across BC, Parent Support Services Society of BC (PSS) will be recognizing these caregivers, and diverse families of all kinds in British Columbia.

We welcome all families to join us for our

Annual Grandparents' Day Festivities. There will be fun, lively, family events to celebrate all grandparents and kinship caregivers, and to raise awareness and funds that support the work we do with grandparent-led families and our parenting programs across BC.

What can you do?

Join us, and invite your friends, colleagues, and family members – to “take a grand step together” on Grandparents Day.

[Bid on items in our online auction!](#)

Your contribution will make a tangible difference in the lives of children, and their families, across BC:

Allow more families access to parenting support by giving us the funds to:

- Expand the number of vital Parent and Grandparent Support Circles across the province
- Provide free child-minding at Support Circles – so all can participate
- Give opportunities for kids raised by their grandparents to meet others kids in similar families. Enable us to increase the number of valuable Parenting Workshops we provide
- Support the development of resources (documentaries, resource guides, etc)
- Provide a break for grandparents raising grandkids

Sign up to walk!
Donate!

Visit the event
website: grgstroll.ca



Framed original signed photo by wildlife photographer—Paul Steeves. Find out how to bid on this one-of-a-kind work of art : contact jane.bouey@parentsupportbc.ca

Advocating For the Families We Work With

Meeting with Ministry of Children and Family's Strategic Initiatives Team.



In April the Ministry for Children and Families' Strategic Initiatives Team reached out to PSS for a meeting to look at Kinship Care rates and the entire system of care. They spent two days with us. PSS articulated that "All children being raised in kinship care, regardless of legal status and duration of care, should receive services and benefits harmonized with those of children in foster care"

Photo: back row L-R Carol Madsen (PSS Executive Director), Kathy Berggren-Clive (Director Strategic Initiatives), Catherine Talbott, Executive Director Strategic Initiatives, Christina Campbell (PSS GRG Support Line—Social Work Advocate, Breanna Viala—A/Director, Strategic Initiatives, Front Row Jane Bouey (PSS Communications), Bella Cenezero (PSS Director of Circles and Community Development, Carly Clarkson (Manager Strategic Initiatives)

Dental Care Extended!

September 2017, the Ministry improved the dental program for BCEA children and Healthy Kids. The enhancements were extended to children whose caregivers are in the Children in the Home of a Relative Program (CIHR). PSS has long advocated for children raised in kinship care to receive the supports and benefits available for foster children.

Effective September 1, 2017, the following changes to the Healthy Kids program took effect:

- increase the ministry's rates for dental services for children to approximately 75 percent of the 2017 BCDA rates
- increase the children's limit for dental services from \$1,400 every two years to \$2,000
- increase access to preventative treatment for children

To find out if your child is eligible call our Support Line at 1-855-474-9777



Provincial Training— March 9 -11th



Volunteer facilitators, steering committee members, childminders and staff from across BC, came together for a weekend of professional development, team building and fun.

It was a profound experience. We made new connections and stretched our boundaries as we learned.

Sessions included:

- Adverse child experiences, toxic shock and trauma informed practice;
- Early childhood development;
- Gender inclusion;
- Overview of complementary parenting programs;
- Participatory learning of history from an Indigenous perspective
- Team building and socialization

Watch our short video about the event: <https://goo.gl/3GNNjb>

Extended Family Caring For Children: Kinship Care Options, Services and Supports

PSS's Jessie Caryl and Christina Campbell hit the road, their free public legal workshops for supporters of grandparents raising grandchildren and other extended family members caring for children.

The workshops on kinship care, covered Ministry of Children and Family Development policy, family law, and services and benefits for families (60-minute presentation followed by discussion). The workshops were aimed at those who provide service to Indigenous kinship caregivers. The goal of the workshops is to ensure that service providers have accurate information on different options for kinship care and the legal and financial implications of each path.

So far our team (a lawyer and a Masters of Social Work) have offered this workshop at the Hiiye'yu Lelum Society (House of Friendship, Duncan), Prince George Friendship Centre, Salish Centre in Tla'amin Nation, Laichwiltach Family Society in Campbell River, the Lii Michif Otpemisiwak Family & Community Services in Kamloops, and the Women's Contact Centre in Williams Lake.

Funding for this project came from the Law Foundation of BC

PSS has gained heightened understanding and new partnerships through this process.

For more info call the Support Line 1-855-474-9777.

Volunteer Facilitators Needed!

Learn to be an effective Circle leader



We have trainings coming up in our regions:

In Nanaimo : Oct 26, 27 & 28 . We have openings for volunteers in communities such as: Duncan, Nanaimo, and Parksville. For more information please contact: Sandi Halvorson at 250-468-9658 or 1-877-345-9777 or sandi.halvorson@parentsupportbc.ca.

In Prince George: October 13, 14, 15. For info: Jessica Turner at 250-962- 0600

jessica.turner@parentsupportbc.ca

Find out about upcoming training in your area: contact 1-877-345-9777

Are you someone who has:

- Good listening & interpersonal skills
- An interest in supporting parent/caregiver and child relationships
- Basic understanding of child development & parenting issues
- Willing to do some community outreach & development activities

- Develop skills for career and personal growth
- Support families in your community
- Letter of reference upon request (minimum 1 year commitment)

"This workshop was inspirational, timely, to the point, energetic, friendly."

"This training helped move my one-on-one counselling skills into a group environment."

Benefits of this training:

- Continuing education opportunities

What past participants say:

"The trainers were very informed with an obvious wealth of experience coupled with a solid academic background that support the activities."

"I was taught how to be a facilitator not a caregiver."

We ask our volunteers to commit 3-5 hrs a week for a minimum of 1 year. This allows our facilitators to develop relationships with the support circle participants within the context of the circle.

Lower Mainland Upcoming Events:

Our monthly parenting workshops resume, with our September workshop "Raising Our Children: The Role of Discipline". Sept. 26th, 6—8 pm. It will be held in our Burnaby office—5623 Imperial St. Limited seats. To attend, please register. Email sasha.rhodes@parentsupportbc.ca or call 604-669-1616 Ext. 104.

Regional Facilitator Training is coming up —November 3, 2018 - See save the date flyer on right..



Check out our online auction—lots of great deals to bid on.

Support our work with families!

Grgstroll.ca/auctions

Parent & Grandparent/Kinship Support Circles in BC

Support Circles—Free, confidential, anonymous, meetings of parents and other caregivers who wish to learn new ways to nurture and protect their children.

To find out more call:

1-877-345-9777 or email office@parentsupportbc.ca



Parent Support Services Society of BC

Join a Circle near you

We have Support Circles that operate in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Filipino, Korean, and Spanish; for Fathers; for parents/caregivers of children on the autism spectrum; for parents/caregivers of children who are gender creative; for Indigenous parents/caregivers; for kinship caregivers; for parents in prison and more.

[We have Support Circles for parents and caregivers just like you!](#)

"I've learned to be more patient with my kids since I started to go to the circle."

Keep our Circles running — <http://www.parentsupportbc.ca/donate/>

Our Support Circles are:

- ◆ Open to all parents & grandparents with children & teens
- ◆ Offer free healthy snacks & often childminding
- ◆ Led by two trained volunteer facilitators
- ◆ Based on a self-help model, are confidential, & held regularly

Our Support Circles operate around the province. They ebb and flow depending on demand and our ability to meet that demand. Contact us to find a Circle near you, or to see about starting one in your area.

office@parentsupportbc.ca

WEBSITE ALERT

PSS developed a new website. We have had a lot of positive feedback on it, however we know that there are still some pages on our PSS website that are not complete. If you notice anything that concerns you, you think is missing, or is hard to locate— please inform our staff person responsible for this work: jane.bouey@parentsupportbc.ca. Also be aware that existing links you may have to pages on our old site will no longer work.

Circle Program Updates



Prince George— Program Coordinator —Jessica Turner

In May GRG Support Line Advocates: Jessie Caryl & Christina Campbell and PSS Director of Circles and Community Development Bella Cenezero visited PG. I joined them as we met with several community partners and allies. Jessie and Christina delivered a workshop on kinship care at the PG Native Friendship Centre. Local Grandparents who are raising their grandchildren and other kinship caregivers were pleased to meet personally with line staff.

Bella and I delivered a workshop on discipline at the PG Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society. New parents were introduced to PSS and our programming. IMSS workers stated that “PSS’s workshop on discipline was the best workshop they had, very interactive and engaging and inclusive for all ESL levels”.

Hadih community house shut down for 2 weeks in May to do renovations to create more family friendly space. As a result more and more families have been attending the parenting support group and family unity group.

PG Pride: PSS helped organize and take part in the Community event for transgender families, attended the PG pride parade.

PGNFC GRG group looking for new members, current group has about 6 core members and would love to meet and support more GRG’s.

Hadih House Family Unity PSC is welcoming new members each week and continues to be very busy. Hadih house Parent Support PSC is very busy as well.

GRG event in PG at Paddlewheel park - family fun, games, snacks and treats for kids.

Upcoming initial facilitators training in PG will be October 13, 14, 15. Posters with more detail to come.

For more info on our work in PG call me at 250-962-0600.

Receiving Proclamations— Grandparents’ Week & Month



PSS’s Bella Cenezero with New Westminster Mayor Jonathan Coté



PSS’s Viktor Panfilenok (on right) with Burnaby Mayor Derek Corrigan

PSS Marches in Pride



Prince George Pride



Vancouver Pride

PSS meets with Philippines Consul General



10 Years of Making Connections



GRG/Kinship Care Family Nature Camp

July 31st—August 2nd

It was the largest in our Camp's 10 year history, with 31 participants. The Nature Camp for GRG/Kinship Care Families was held on Galiano Island from July 31- Aug 2. Sandi Halvorson, PSS's

"I learned we are not alone" Program Coordinator Central Island

Region who has been involved since the beginning, says participants included, "14 adult caregivers, mostly grandparents, one great-grandparent, an aunt & a couple of uncles thrown in for good measure and the 17 children that they are raising."

PSS holds the camp in partnership with the Galiano Conservancy Association. We are able to offer this Kinship Family Nature Camp, only because of donations and occasional small grants for this amazing project. Sandi points out, "It is a struggle every year, but somehow we've manage to cobble together the funds."

In the last three years PSS has been working



to bring in participants from across the province. This year families travelled from communities like, Gold River, Nanaimo, Victoria, Kelowna, 100 Mile House and Williams Lake to attend the camp. The ages of the kids ranged from 6 to 14

"Making friends" Although the 11 families all came from different parts of the province, the connections

that were made were priceless, PSS staff member Daniela Alvarado-Torres said.



This was Daniela's first Camp. "Building relationships, making connections and stepping out of your comfort zone, are all part of the

experience when participating in the Galiano Kinship Nature Camp", remarked Daniela, PSS's Community Engagement and Volunteer Program Coordinator. Sandi Halvorson pointed out that "When people ask me what is so special about the camp; it is hard to think of one single thing, it's a lot of things that all go together. Galiano Island is a

"Unplugging" and "Connecting with Nature"

very beautiful place. It is the only Gulf Island in BC that has a Conservancy Association that is as well-established as the one on Galiano and partnering with the Association is a large part of what makes the whole trip possible. Additionally, while we call it



a camp, the accommodation at the Bodega Ridge cabins takes a notch or two above.”

In the 10 year history of the GRG/Kinship Family Camp, Parent Support Services has offered 5 one day camps, 5 two day camps and 4 three day camps. Sandi states that, “While we are on the island the Galiano Conservancy staff share some unique places on the island. We explore tide pools and beaches. We learn about forest creatures.” The Galiano has a Learning Centre and Sandi points out that, “staff and families share ideas about how we can all be good stewards of nature, both on the island and when we return home.”



Daniela remarked that, “As a staff member on the trip, I was able to see how supportive the kinship caregivers were to one another. The relationships that came out of this experience are

ones that we hope to see in our camps, programs and Support Circles. Although the caregivers did gain a lot from this trip, I’d have to say that the **“Meeting families in the same situation”**

children were the luckiest. Seeing those kids build friendships with others and interact with nature, was one of the highlights I take away. It was amazing to watch the children just click, regardless of their age range.”

While the camp is offered at no charge to the

families, the actual cost of the camp is significant. Parent Support Services relies on the support of the Galiano Conservancy Association, Bodega Ridge, the Adoption and Permanency Fund, donations and fundraising.

Our Grandparents’ Day campaign is raising funds that will make a real difference in families’ lives. To donate or bid on our online auction go to <http://grgstroll>.



Photos by Skylar Huang, Daniela Alvarado-Torres, Sandi Halvorson.

Thank you to our Summer Students!

We were privileged to have four students working with us this year—through the Federal Government’s Canada Summer Job Program. The students worked on a number of projects including— attending the Galiano Nature Camp, Circle promotion, soliciting donations for our Grandparents’ Day events, and producing posters, graphics and videos for Pride and Grandparents’ Day, as well as working on lay-out for our Annual Report.

We couldn’t have accomplished what we have without you:

- Nicola Kapron—Nanaimo
- Mercedes Guerra—Victoria
- Skylar Huang—Provincial Office
- Crystal Man—Provincial Office

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sarah Allan (President) - Vancouver—*Lawyer*

Kamy Zargarpour (Vice President/Secretary) - North Vancouver—*Retired Information/Technology*

Jade Chan (Treasurer) - Richmond—*Accountant*

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Louise Costello — Victoria—*Retired from child mental health practice —PhD*

Shaun Wilson—North Vancouver—*Partner, KPMG*

Randall Gillis—Vancouver— *Child Psychologist– PhD*

Melissa Cailleaux—Prince George— *Community Health Director*

Jacob Black-Lock— Burnaby—*Project Manager*

Crissy George—Vancouver—*Retired Social Worker*

FUNDERS AND DONORS

We acknowledge the financial assistance of:

- The Province of British Columbia
- United Way of the Lower Mainland
- United Way of Greater Victoria
- United Way of Northern British Columbia
- United Way of Central and Northern Vancouver Island
- Law Foundation of BC
- Children’s Health Foundation
- Vancouver Foundation
- Adoption and Permanency Fund—Victoria Foundation
- City of Prince George
- Provincial Health Services Authority
- Odd Fellows—Vancouver
- Appreciation to all of our generous individual and corporate donors.



We are grateful to our supporters and community partners who work with us to create a better world for all children and families. Collaboration is the key to successful social change. Our partners provide meeting space, childcare, food for Circle participants. Others provide consultation, referral and promotion. Many individuals share their wisdom, time, efforts and skills for the success of PSS programs and resources.

TO DONATE—<http://parentsupportbc.ca/donate>

Call for Nominations: The Bill McFarland Award

for Excellence in the Advancement of Child Welfare

Awarded to a group or individual for:

**Long time, outstanding devotion to the prevention of child abuse and/or;
Efforts related to a project which is making a lasting mark in the area of child welfare or
family preservation.**

The Bill McFarland Award for Excellence in the Advancement of Child Welfare was named after Bill McFarland. Bill was an advocate for children throughout his life and social work career. His achievements include: founder of the Alberta Foster Parents Association, the National Federation of Youth in Care Networks, and Parent Support Services Society of BC

In addition, he was a member of the Berger Commission, a consultant to the Gove Inquiry, and a recognized expert on the Young Offenders Act. Bill was appreciated by all who worked with him for his integrity, compassion and tireless efforts toward the care and welfare of all children. This award honours his memory and his tireless efforts for there and welfare of all children.

Previous recipients include: Ardith Walkem (Walpetko We'dalx), Dr. Allison Rees & LIFE Seminars; Carrie Gelson; Marsha Early; Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond; Joyce Preston; Delores Romano; BC Association of Family Resource Programs and Fran Grunberg.



PSS Founder—Bill McFarland

Right: Ardeth Walkem - Walpetko We'dax—
Recipient of the 2016
Bill McFarland Award
for the Advancement
of Excellence in Child
Welfare. (with her chil-
dren).



Deadline for Nominations—Friday September 14th

To find out more go to : www.parentsupportbc.ca/about-bill-mcfarland-award/

BILL MCFARLAND AWARD

FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHILD WELFARE

Awarded to a group or individual for:

Long time, outstanding devotion to the prevention of child abuse and/or;
Efforts related to a project which is making a lasting mark in the area of child
welfare or family preservation.

Deadline Friday September 14

parentsupportbc.ca

Join Us—Become a Member Support Us—Donate — Volunteer!

Name _____

Organization (if applicable) _____

Address _____ City _____ Province ____ Postal Code _____

Ph. number _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

*Please note that membership is valid until the end of each fiscal year, i.e. March 31st,
subject for annual renewal. Volunteer facilitators pay on a sliding scale based on income.*

Membership amount enclosed and paid by: Cash Cheque

\$5.00 - \$35.00 Volunteer Facilitator \$35.00 Individuals \$100.00 Agencies

Or via our website at <http://www.parentsupportbc.ca/become-a-member/>

Volunteer and Individual Members are entitled to stand for election to and hold office on the Board of Directors of the Society elected at our Annual General Meeting (December 5, 2016). Members are entitled to attend PSS Workshops for free.

Join Parent Support Services Society of BC—be a part of creating a world where all children and their families are nurtured, valued, and safe

I want to DONATE \$ _____ Registered Charity: BIN 10677 8780 RR 0001

Or you can donate via our website at <http://parentsupportbc.ca/donation>

I want to VOLUNTEER! - <http://parentsupportbc.ca/volunteer>

Return to: Parents Support Services Society of BC 204 - 5623 Imperial Street, Burnaby, BC V5J 1G1